HP (Finally) Decides on webOS' Fate

Written by Marco Attard
15 December 2011

HP finally answers the question on what will happen to webOS-- the company will neither sell nor discontinue the OS, but will instead "contribute" it to the open source community.

"webOS is the only platform designed from the ground up to be mobile, cloud-connected and scalable," CEO Meg Whitman says. "By contributing this innovation, HP unleashes the creativity of the open source community to advance a new generation of applications and devices."

The announcement comes after months of speculation on how HP was going to sell webOS to anyone from Amazon to RIM and even Oracle-- but it appears HP remained empty-handed after trying to find a buyer.

So it did the second-best thing-- going to the charity shop instead of the dumpster.

HP mentions no future hardware plans so the TouchPad will probably remain the last HP-branded webOS device, at least for a while.

webOS has something of a rocky history-- from the $1.2BN Palm purchase in 2010 to HP spending $1.66BN to kill off Palm and webOS after ex-CEO Leo Apotheker announced the now-scrapped Garage Sale plans.

A bit of a sorry finale (one ending with not a bang, but a whimper) for once promising software, unless the open source community manages to make something great with it.

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Go HP to Contribute webOS to Open Source